

EXHIBIT C.28

PART 2 OF 2

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Golan who were being subjected to repression and torture in Zionist detention centres.

- 14 February 2001, a general strike was proclaimed throughout the occupied Golan and the villages of Majdal Shams, Buq'ata, Mas'ada, Ain Qunya and al-Ghajar witnessed mass demonstrations on the occasion of the nineteenth anniversary of the open-ended general strike which our people in the occupied Golan proclaimed in 1982 as an expression of their rejection of the Israeli occupation authorities' decision to annex the Golan and impose Israeli identity on its population.
- Our people in the occupied Syrian Golan also demonstrated on 21 April 2001, demanding the release of all the Arab detainees whom Israel was holding, without charge, in its prisons and detention centres in flagrant violation of all international conventions and customs. The demonstrators, from all the villages of the occupied Golan, who gathered in the village of Majdal Shams on the occasion of Arab Prisoner's Day, waved Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian flags and affirmed their absolute loyalty to their Syrian motherland and their determination to continue their struggle and resistance until the last inch of occupied Arab land had been liberated.
- On 24 April, which has been designated as Syrian Arab Prisoners' Day, the Committee for the Support of Syrian Prisoners in the Occupied Syrian Golan and Occupied Palestine organized a sit-in in front of the office of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations office at Damascus in solidarity with the prisoners from the Golan in Zionist occupation prisons. The demonstrators waved photographs of the Syrian prisoners in occupation jails, as well as banners calling upon the international community to intervene to secure the release of the Syrian and other Arab detainees in Israeli occupation prisons.

"The numerous Arab and international declarations calling upon Israel to withdraw from the occupied Syrian Golan are illustrated by the following:

"The Arab parliamentary delegations participating in the one hundred and fifth session of the Inter-Parliamentary Union held at Havana in early April 2001 issued a declaration emphasizing their support and backing for the Al-Aqsa Intifada, calling for condemnation of the aggressive terrorist practices of the Israeli forces and urging the international community to bring pressure to bear on Israel to comply with the United Nations resolutions, to withdraw fully, to the 4 June 1967 line, from the occupied Syrian Golan and the other occupied territories in southern Lebanon and the occupied Palestinian territory and to acknowledge the right of the Palestinian people to return, to exercise self-determination and to establish their independent State with Holy Jerusalem as its capital.

"On 11 July 2001, François Rivasseau, a spokesman for the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stressed the need for the occupied Syrian Golan to be restored fully to Syrian sovereignty so that a just and comprehensive peace could be achieved on the basis of the resolutions of the Security Council and the principle of land for peace. In his statement, he said that France's position in this regard was well known and unequivocal. He criticized the statements made two days earlier by Ariel Sharon, the Israeli Prime Minister, concerning the occupied Syrian Golan, in which he had said that the occupation of the Golan

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was one of the finest achievements and successes in the history of Zionism.

12 July 2001, Amr Moussa, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, said that the Arabs, the Arab League and its Secretary-General could not but reject the words and acts of Ariel Sharon, the Israeli Prime Minister, and particularly his statements concerning settlement in the Golan and its retention under occupation.

"On 18 July 2001, at its emergency meeting held in Cairo, the Follow-up and Action Committee established at the Arab Summit confirmed that the Golan was Syrian Arab territory from which Israel should withdraw to the 4 June 1967 line in accordance with United Nations resolutions and characterized the Israeli Prime Minister's statements encouraging settlement in the Golan as a flagrant violation of the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations, of the principles of international law and of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, under which settlement was regarded as a war crime. The Committee also emphasized that the Shabaa farms were occupied Lebanese territory from which Israel must withdraw in order to comply fully with Security Council resolution 425 (1978).

"The General Assembly in its resolution 55/51 of 1 December 2000, entitled 'The Syrian Golan', reaffirming the fundamental principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, declared that Israel had failed so far to comply with Security Council resolution 497 (1981), also declared that the Israeli decision of 1 December 1981 to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan was null and void and had no validity whatsoever, as confirmed by the Security Council in its resolution 497 (1981), and called upon Israel to rescind it.

"In its resolution 55/209 of 20 December 2000, entitled 'Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources', the General Assembly reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, called upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, to cause loss or depletion of or to endanger the natural resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan.

"The twenty-eighth session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held at Bamako in June 2001, in its resolution 3/28-P on the occupied Syrian Golan, emphasized that the establishment of settlements and the encouragement of settlers to move to the occupied Syrian Golan constituted a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. The Conference condemned Israel for failing to comply with Security Council resolution 497 (1981), for continuing to alter the legal status and demographic composition of the occupied Syrian Golan and for attempting to impose Israeli citizenship, identity and identity cards on Syrian Arab citizens. The resolution also confirmed the right of the Syrian Arab Republic to recover its full sovereignty over the occupied Golan."

VI. Conclusions

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Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem

9 This section IV above shows, the information provided to the Special Committee, by knowledgeable persons whose credibility the Special Committee has found no reason to question, has led the Special Committee to the conclusion that: the considerable and extensive controls placed over the Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem by the occupying authority, and the severe measures taken by the occupying authority in the enforcement of such controls, appear to be generally dismissive of human rights and oppressive of the Palestinians.

96. The considerable and extensive controls themselves and the very severe manner in which such controls have been enforced are, in the view of the Special Committee, totally inconsistent with generally accepted human rights standards and obligations. Such controls and methods of enforcement are also, in the view of the Special Committee, in breach of a number of provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

97. Confrontations between the occupying authority and the Palestinians, the escalating violence, the death and injury caused to both Palestinians and Israelis, the greatly disproportionate force used by the occupying authority, resulting in far greater losses to the Palestinians, have had the most devastating consequences in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

98. The occupation of, and the circumstances prevailing in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem since 29 September 2000 are not conducive to the recognition and observance of human rights.

99. It is unquestionable that, on the part of Israelis and Palestinians alike, there is a yearning for peace.

100. Yet for peace to be achieved, it is imperative that there be a return to the peace process.

101. Until such time as the peace process is satisfactorily concluded, the human rights of the Palestinians of the occupied territories must, of course, be fully recognized and fully honoured by the occupying authority.

102. Most regrettably, the only conclusion that now seems possible, from statements made and materials provided to the Special Committee, is that the human rights of the Palestinians in the occupied territories are being harshly ignored.

Occupied Syrian Golan

103. The occupied Syrian Golan has not had the confrontations and the violence that Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem have experienced over the past year.

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104. Yet the problems of the occupied Syrian Golan, described in earlier reports of the Special Committee, continue undiminished. There are the problems of preserving the national identity of persons

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who have been under occupation for such a long period of time; expansion and increase in Israeli settlements and the privileged position of the settlers; the difficult circumstances of Syrians of the occupied Golan who are an agricultural people; and the personal tragedies that afflict families divided because of the occupation of the Syrian Golan.

Notes

¹ General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).

² See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

³ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 972.

⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 249, No. 3511.

⁶ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *The Hague Conventions and Declarations of 1899 and 1907*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1915.

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in Jerusalem are also on hold. Moreover, as the Palestinian Authority is responsible for transmitting requests for family reunification to the Israeli authorities, and as administrative communication between b sides is currently at a low point, it is becoming increasingly difficult to fill a request and obtain an authorization.

Registration of children

85. A memorandum of intent will not permit the registration of a child until it is proven that both parents' centre of life is in Jerusalem. Until this criterion is satisfied, a long time may elapse. In the meantime, the child cannot be registered in a governmental school as he or she does not have an identity card. The family will thus be denied the allocations/subsidies provided by the National Insurance Institute.

Social benefits

86. The National Insurance Institute also requires that Jerusalemites prove that their centre of life is in Jerusalem. Inspectors from the Institute interview families about this issue. The inspectors speak with the family in Arabic, but record the interviews in Hebrew, which is not understood by the vast majority of the residents. The interviewee is asked to sign a summary of the interview. The Jerusalem Centre has dealt with cases where the inspectors did not record the interview accurately in Hebrew and what was r rded was harmful to the interviewees' claim that their centre of life was in Jerusalem.

Taxes

87. The proceeds from the *arnona* (municipal tax) are used to fund the provision of services by the Jerusalem Municipality. Even though more than 50 per cent of East Jerusalem is in the highest tax band, Band A, there is clear discrimination between the level of services provided to Palestinian areas in Jerusalem and to Jewish areas.

Settlements

88. Israel is seeking to prevent territorial contiguity between East Jerusalem and Ramallah to the north, East Jerusalem and Bethlehem to the south, and East Jerusalem and Jericho to the west and to control all the land around Jerusalem.

89. There is also an Eastern Ring Road project which will construct an infrastructure of roads linking all the settlements and encircling Arab East Jerusalem. Lands have been confiscated in Ras al-Amud, Mount Scopus and Wadi Joz for this purpose.

building permits

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90. In 90 per cent of cases, houses in East Jerusalem are constructed without a permit. Fourteen houses

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in Shufat were recently demolished. Houses can be demolished by municipal order or court order. The municipality can issue such an order if the house is uninhabited or has been inhabited for less than two months. The house can be demolished 24 hours after the order has been issued, leaving very little opportunity for Palestinians to challenge the order in the High Court, even if they can afford to pay a lawyer to do so. It takes an average of two years to process a court order for the demolition of a house.

H. The special difficulties of the Palestinians in refugee camps

91. The attention of the Special Committee was drawn to the condition of the approximately 1,407,621 registered Palestinian refugees living in the refugee camps of the West Bank and Gaza, in depressing circumstances under severe restrictions that have continued for decades and have been made considerably worse since 29 September 2000.

92. As noted in paragraph 19 above, a number of persons living in a refugee camp in the Syrian Arab Republic also requested to be heard by the Special Committee and spoke of their difficulties.

93. The following are extracts from, or summaries of, passages in statements made to the Special Committee. They concern some of the matters brought to the attention of the Special Committee in the course of its field mission, by witnesses whose reliability the Special Committee has no reason to question.

(a) "In the occupied territories, 50 per cent of the residents of both the West Bank and Gaza combined are refugees ... The fact that UNRWA is operational in the field does not mean that the refugees are getting their full range of rights adequately represented. UNRWA may be covering some legal rights of Palestinian refugees, but its mandate is very focused and limited to assistance, social welfare, education — these types of things ... When Israel is deliberately imposing a siege, what resources do the Palestinian refugees have to fall back on? What economic resources? They have very few economic resources because they are by definition landless, unless they have been very fortunate and have been able to purchase land since then. All their original land holdings have been confiscated without compensation. So they lost everything. Many of them live in camps, although not all of them. There are refugees who live outside camps. They have very very limited means of subsistence that they own themselves, so they are very vulnerable."

(b) "The refugees are so vulnerable because they cannot go out and farm. They have nowhere to raise goats or sheep. They don't have orchards. They don't have chickens. They don't have space. They are living in camps or they may be renting or what have you."

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(c) "Regarding the daily life of Palestinians in the refugee camps, as I said earlier, the problems began in the aftermath of the outbreak of the current intifada ... the Palestinians who were dependent on the Israeli labour market for work have been completely denied employment. Refugee camps are the most overcrowded places in the world. According to UNRWA figures — these are on the UNRWA web site — almost 140,000 people live in the Shati refugee camp, which covers only 1 square kilometre. So one

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can imagine what kind of life they lead.”

Occupied Syrian Golan

94. During its visit to Damascus, the Special Committee received from the Director of the International Organizations Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic the text of the report entitled “ Report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic on Israeli practices affecting the human rights of Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Arab Golan”. The Special Committee reproduces below the English translation of the report, as presented in Arabic, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

“Due to the ongoing Israeli occupation of the Golan, its Syrian Arab population are continuing to suffer from violations of the most fundamental principles of law, justice and human rights by the Israeli occupation authorities, which are using every means of repression, coercion and terrorism against the Syrian Arab population, who have been suffering under the yoke of occupation since 1967, in total disregard of international law and the series of resolutions adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations and in flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international humanitarian law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property of 1954.

“Your distinguished Committee is visiting the Syrian Arab Republic for the thirty-third time pursuant to the relevant General Assembly resolutions, the most recent of which was resolution 55/130 of 8 December 2000, while Israel is still refusing to receive and cooperate with your Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, which was established under the terms of General Assembly resolution 2443 (XXIII) of 19 December 1968.

“Since the submission of our last report in May 2000, the human rights situation of the population of the Syrian Arab Golan has remained difficult due to the manner in which the present Israeli Government, like its predecessor, has obstinately persisted in its arbitrary and coercive policies and practices, particularly the expansion of settlements with all that this involves by way of expropriation of land and water and violations of the rights of the population of the occupied Syrian Golan.

“In its previous reports, your Committee made the international community clearly aware of the true nature of the tragic situation of the Syrian population living under Israeli occupation due to the policies and practices in which the Israeli occupation authorities are engaging.

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“In our present report, like those of previous years, we will be referring to documented statements by Israeli officials and articles published in the Israeli press concerning the policies and practices that are

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- In November 1980, offices were opened in the Arab villages of the Golan for the issue of Israeli identity cards and attempts were made to impose Israeli citizenship on the Syrian Arab population.
 - In March 1981, Geula Cohen, a member of the Tehiya movement elected to the Knesset, once again put forward a motion calling for the annexation of the Golan to Israel.
 - In July 1981, Begin announced his Government's second programme, paragraph 11 of which stated that Israel would never relinquish the Golan or remove any settlement that had been established there. It also stipulated that the Government would determine an appropriate time for the application of Israeli law, jurisdiction and administration in the Golan.
 - On 14 December 1981, the Israeli Government brought before the Knesset a bill of law providing for the annexation of the Golan. It was approved by a majority of the members of the Knesset and Israel officially declared its annexation of the Golan.
 - Following the announcement of the annexation decision, the Israeli Minister of the Interior issued orders for the Border Guard and the police to take over the maintenance of public order from the army. However, all the pre-annexation directives concerning detention, permits and visas remained in force. The Minister of Justice also ordered the establishment of two conciliation courts, the first being in the Syrian Arab village of Mas'ada and the second at the settlement of Katzrin in the central Golan. These two courts were endowed with legislative powers in the Golan. The Minister also granted wider powers to the Nazareth district court to hear cases concerning the Golan, as well as appeals against judgements handed down by the two conciliation courts. The Minister of Communications opened a government office at Mas'ada.
 - On 14 February 1982, Israeli nationality was imposed on the Syrian Arab population of the occupied part of the Golan.
- "In addition to the above, prior to the decision to annex the Golan, the Israeli authorities implemented other administrative and organizational measures, including the following:
- Dismissal of village headmen elected by the Syrian Arab population;
 - Imposition of local councils by force, in so far as the Israeli authorities appointed their members;
 - Attempts to induce Syrian Arab residents to join dubious organizations in Israel, such as the Druze-Israeli Scouts and the Druze-Zionist Organization;
 - Establishment of dubious associations, such as the Druze-Zionist Circle, in the occupied Syrian Arab villages;
 - Forcing Syrian Arabs to join Histadrut, for which clubs were established;

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being inflicted on our citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan in violation of all international laws and human rights instruments.

"This information and documentation will help you to prepare your report and to give a true account of the manner in which, since its aggression in 1967, Israel has been continually challenging the international community and its humanitarian values as detailed below:

"A. The annexation of the Golan

"The Golan is situated in the south-western part of the Syrian Arab Republic, of the territory of which it forms an integral part. It covers an area of 1,860 square kilometres, extending 67 km from north to south and 25 km from west to east.

"Since 1967, Israel has been occupying part of the national territory of the Syrian Arab Republic in the Golan and blatantly violating the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, including the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination of 1965 and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as international humanitarian law and numerous United Nations resolutions, particularly Security Council resolution 497 (1981).

"Since the beginning of its occupation of the Golan, Israel has been engaging in repressive and arbitrary practices and inhuman acts designed to isolate the Golan, detach it from its Syrian motherland and subsequently annex it to Israel and impose the policy of fait accompli for which, at the same time, it was preparing the ground at all the official, popular, legal and political levels through large-scale inflammatory information campaigns. The most significant of those measures and attempts to annex the Golan were as follows:

- In June 1979, the Golan, Galilee and Jordan Valley Settlements Committee, with encouragement from the Government and political movements in Israel, collected signatures on a petition stating that the Golan was an integral part of Israel. The petition was signed by 73 members of the ninth Knesset representing most of the political parties and, in particular, Likud and Ma'arach. They subsequently formed the so-called 'Golan lobby'. The first regional council in the Golan, comprising 14 settlements controlling most of the land in the Golan, was established at the settlement of Khisfin.

- In July 1980, the Israeli Citizenship Act was amended in such a way as to empower the Minister of the Interior to grant Israeli citizenship to the population of the territories occupied in 1967.

- In October 1980, two motions calling for the annexation of the Golan to Israel were tabled in the Knesset. The first was put forward by the Tehiya movement and the second by 18 members of the ninth Knesset, all of whom belonged to the ruling coalition.

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- Forcing Syrian Arab citizens to subscribe to the medical insurance scheme and the Kupat Holim s. less fund;
- Forcing Arab teachers to join the Teachers Union in Israel;
- Preventing Arab citizens from establishing charitable associations to cater for their medical and social needs;
- Replacing Syrian Arab vehicle licence plates with Israeli plates;
- Recording new births in registers bearing the title "State of Israel, Ministry of the Interior";
- Imposition of Israeli currency;
- Appointment by the Minister of the Interior of an adviser on Druze affairs in the Golan, a post that reports directly to the Ministerial Committee on Arab Affairs;
- Imposition of the Hebrew language on the Syrian Arab population;
- Exertion of pressure on Syrian Arab citizens to vote in elections to the Knesset;
- Linkage of the economy of the occupied Syrian Arab villages to the Israeli market and attempts to damage that economy by making it dependent on Israeli enterprises.

"Through the above-mentioned measures, Israel attempted to obliterate the Arab and national identity and affiliations of the Syrian Arab population of the occupied Golan with a view to facilitating its annexation and the imposition of Israeli nationality.

"Last year, declarations made by Israeli officials and measures actually taken showed that Israel was determined to continue its aggressive and expansionist policy of annexing the Golan.

"B. Israeli settlement in the Golan

"Expansionism, aggression and denial of the historic rights of others are the principal features that have characterized the successive extremist and aggressive Israeli Governments. Israeli settlement in the occupied Syrian Golan, expropriation of land and water, expulsion of the Syrian population from their lands and implementation of the policy of Judaization are basic constituents of Israel's permanent higher strategic objectives.

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"Since the beginning of the occupation of the Golan in 1967, the Israeli occupation authorities have

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formulated a settlement plan to alter the demography of the Golan in which, according to the most recent statistics compiled by the Central Bureau of Statistics in Damascus in 1967, between 157,000 and 1 000 Syrian Arab citizens were living at that time either in the town of Quneitra or in the 300 villages and farms, from which they were evicted when all the inhabited areas were razed, with the exception of the villages of Majdal Shams, Ain Qunya, Buq'ata, Mas'ada and al-Ghajar, where the inhabitants held on to their villages and lands in spite of all the repressive practices of the occupation authorities, rejected Israeli identity and resisted the occupation in expectation of the Golan's return to its motherland. About 23,000 Syrian citizens are currently living in the Arab villages of the Golan, where they are being subjected to various types of repression and violations of the human rights provided for in international instruments, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949.

"At the present time, there are 40 Israeli settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan in which more than 15,000 settlers are living and Israel has decided to construct a further 2,500 housing units in order to increase the number of settlers to 36,000.

"These settlements, which were built to replace the Arab villages destroyed by the occupation forces, bear names derived from the Torah, from the names of alleged ancient Jewish settlements or from Hebrew corruption of some Arabic place names. This reveals the attempts that are being made to endow these locations with a false Hebrew identity in order to justify their occupation.

"... settlement plans and activities during the present year and the summer of last year confirm the aggressive and expansionist intention of the present Government of Ariel Sharon and the Government of his predecessor Ehud Barak to perpetuate the occupation of the Golan. Israeli settlement operations in the Golan from May 2000 to July 2001 are illustrated by the following:

- The Ministry of Housing and Construction announced a tender for the construction of 86 housing units in a residential area of the settlement of Katzrin which was established about two and a half years ago and already comprises 260 housing units.
- In April 2000, the Ministry began the preparatory work for the construction of 200 housing units at that location and Sami Bar-Lev, the chairman of the Katzrin local council, confirmed that the settlement's expansion plans would continue as normal (*Ha'aretz*, 2 June 2001).
- The Israeli Ministry of Housing and Construction announced a tender for the construction of 194 new housing units at the settlement of Katzrin. The preparatory work for the construction of these units had actually begun several weeks before the announcement of that tender (the Jerusalem newspaper *Al-Quds*, 4 June 2000).

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- With regard to the seizure of Arab land, on 8 June 2000, the occupation authorities sealed off parts of the village of al-Ghajar on the pretext of demarcation of the frontier with Lebanon. A total area of about 10 km² of the village land was sealed off in spite of the strong protest by its residents, who held a sit-in in the village on 9 June 2000, when students from the village also refused to attend their secondary

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school at Mas'ada. On 5 February 2001, Israel continued its arbitrary actions by surrounding the village of al-Ghajar with a barbed-wire fence and earth embankments, leaving it only with a narrow point of access on the southern side. A trench was also dug around the village on the north-eastern side, where iron posts were embedded in the ground. The iron gate that used to link the village to the neighbouring Lebanese village of al-Wazzani was removed, thereby preventing the inhabitants of al-Ghajar from talking to Lebanese citizens, and an iron gate was installed to the north of the village in order to deny its inhabitants access to the Lebanese border.

- On 29 June 2001, the Israeli newspaper *Yediot Aharanot* reported that plans had been made for the construction of about 150 new housing units at eight settlements in the Golan through the addition of 10 to 20 single-storey houses at each of the settlements (Bnei Yehuda, Kanaf, Kidmat Zvi, Givat Yoav, Neot Golan, Ramat Magshimim, Keshet and Had-Nes).
- In the latter part of June 2000, Israeli bulldozers began the preparatory work for the construction of 207 new housing units at the settlement of Katzrin. Twenty of these units were sold and the names of 90 families wishing to live there were registered. The occupied territory of the Golan was witnessing intense construction activity through the commencement of preparations for the construction of numerous housing units at the settlements (*Yediot Aharanot*, 29 June 2000).
- On 24 August 2000, the newspaper *Ha'aretz* reported that the Israeli occupation authorities had given the green light for a plan under which 350 dwellings were to be constructed at the settlement of Ke'la Allon which Israel had established in the central part of the occupied Syrian Golan. This was revealed on 23 August by representatives of the Israeli settlers in the Golan, who announced that it would help to ensure a ten-fold increase in the number of settlers living in that settlement.
- On 22 August, the Israeli Planning Commission approved a plan for the construction of three residential areas at the settlement of Katzrin, thereby authorizing the construction of 86 new dwellings for settlers. These new settlement dwellings which the occupation authorities have decided to build form part of the 200 dwellings the construction of which was announced on 11 April 2000.
- It is noteworthy that the Israeli occupation authorities have accommodated about 17,000 Israeli settlers in the occupied Syrian Golan.
- The Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* also revealed that, on 20 August, the Galilee Settlement Committee had approved a structural plan for the expansion of the settlement of Ke'la Allon in the occupied Syrian Golan. According to the newspaper, that settlement, which currently accommodated 19 Jewish families, would be expanded to include 350 new settlement units and thousands of new settlers. The heads of the Israeli settlement councils in the Golan had welcomed the measure to increase the pace of settlement and construction in the Golan.
- The *Al-Quds* newspaper, which is published in the occupied Arab territories, revealed that, according to Israeli sources, hundreds of housing units had been constructed in recent months at a number of

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Israeli settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan and that various settlements were currently being expanded through the construction of new residential areas to absorb new settlers. The newspaper had learned that a start had recently been made on the construction of water reservoirs for the settlers in the occupied Syrian Golan and that the heads of the settlements in the Golan were intending to establish a new settlement. At the same time, the Jewish Agency had published a report indicating that 73,000 new Jewish immigrants from various parts of the world had come to Israel during the last year as permanent residents. Israeli Army Radio, which broadcasts in Hebrew, had quoted that report as saying that 63,000 of the new settlers had come from the States of the former Soviet Union and 3,500 from Ethiopia and that Sallai Meridor, the Chairman of the Jewish Agency in Israel, had called for those settlers to be absorbed in the Israeli settlements.

- According to Israeli sources, hundreds of housing units had been established during the summer of 2000 at a number of settlements in the Golan and various settlements had been expanded through the construction of new residential areas such as Savyon Katzrin. The leaders of the settlers in the Golan had said that they intended to establish a new settlement (*Al-Quds*, 27 September 2000).

- The Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* revealed that there had been a strong upswing in settlement activity in the occupied Syrian Golan, illustrated by the existence of plans for the construction of 1,500 new housing units at the settlement of Katzrin. In its edition published on 1 November 2000, the newspaper further reported that environmental studies were currently being conducted for the construction of new settlement units on the slopes of the occupied Syrian Golan and the establishment of the requisite infrastructure therefor. The newspaper quoted a source at the office of former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak as saying that expansion in the Golan had resumed intensively following the removal of all the obstacles impeding it. The newspaper added that an area of 1,500 dunums had been annexed to the western suburbs of that settlement and the Israeli Border Affairs Committee, having recently approved plans to expand the settlement, had referred those plans to the Northern District Planning and Construction Committee. Yigal Shahr, the district director at the Israeli Ministry of the Interior, said that the procedures for obtaining approval would be speeded up in order to preclude the appearance of any internal opposition. He claimed that, from the legal standpoint, the Golan formed part of Israel and they had no directives indicating the contrary. The newspaper also referred to the existence of another plan for the establishment of a further 50 housing units at the settlement of Ke'la Allon and reported that the Office of the Israeli Prime Minister had approved the conduct of studies in preparation for an expansion of settlements in the occupied Golan, including the construction of 2,500 new housing units at the settlements of Kanav and Maaleh Gamla.

- The Israeli Northern District Planning and Construction Committee approved a new scheme for the construction of an additional 50 housing units at the settlement of Ke'la Allon and the Office of Prime Minister Barak authorized the conduct of an environmental study for the construction of a further 2,500 housing units at the settlements of Kanav and Maaleh Gamla (*Al-Quds*, 2 November 2000).

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- The expansion of settlements continued in the Golan, where the occupation authorities further expanded the area of their 40 settlements. The most recent illustration of this appeared in the 2 November 2000 edition of the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz*, which spoke of Israel's intention to expand

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its settlements through the construction of a further 1,500 housing units at the settlement of Katzrin, the largest settlement in the Golan. Other settlements would also be expanded and supplied with water and electricity. The occupation authorities had decided to construct new housing units on the slopes of the Golan, including 50 new units at the settlements of Kanav and Maaleh Gamla in the southern and central Golan.

- Following the failure of the political talks between Israel and Syria, the structural planning for additional settlement buildings and improvement of the settlement infrastructure in the occupied territory of the Golan resumed. These plans included the construction of a further three residential areas comprising 1,500 housing units over and above those provided for in the structural plan for the settlement of Katzrin. They also included the installation of sewage pipes and the construction of wastewater treatment plants and rainwater storage facilities. An official from the Office of Prime Minister Barak said that they had resumed the normal pattern of activity and had held consultations with all the Israeli bodies concerned with settlement. Various articles in the press also indicated that the competent Israeli authorities had approved the construction of a new residential area on 1,500 dunums of land to the west of the settlement of Katzrin for the first time in 20 years (*Al-Quds*, 2 November 2000).
- According to Israeli sources, an amount of \$7 million was to be invested for the establishment of a large commercial and tourist centre covering 11,000 m² devoted to high-tech industries in the area under the control of the local council of the settlement of Katzrin (*Yediot Aharanot*, 10 November 2000).
- On 24 December 2000, the Israeli authorities approved the expansion and development of the core settlements in the Golan and the establishment of new settlements, thereby further confirming Israel's true expansionist intentions in the Golan. In a previous decision, referred to as 'Golan 2000', they had expressed their desire to more than double the current number of 17,000 settlers in the Golan.
- According to an Israeli source, the Israeli Ministry of Housing had invited tenders for the construction of 200 housing units at the settlement of Katzrin, the new dwellings to be built in a new residential area at that settlement in which about 7,500 settlers were already living in the latter part of 2000 (*Al-Quds*, 12 December 2000).
- According to Israeli sources, on 29 December 2000, the Israeli Government had given the green light for further settlement projects in the Golan under which 350 new dwellings would be constructed at the settlement of Ke'la Allon, which the occupation forces had established in the Golan, as a step which both the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption and the settlers regarded as part of the endeavours to ensure a ten-fold expansion of that settlement. This new aggressive settlement decision supplemented other measures which Israeli political and settlement authorities had announced the previous April, including tenders for the construction of a further 86 housing units at the settlement of Katzrin 'as part of a new settlement plan for the construction of more than 200 new housing units to help to intensify and expand Jewish settlement in the Golan'.

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- In a statement published by the Spanish newspaper *El Mundo* on 2 February 2001, Israeli Prime

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Minister Ariel Sharon said that he was renewing his commitment to maintain the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan and the Arab city of Jerusalem, including the Haram al-Sharif. Sharon also repeated his refusal to accept the principle of the return of the Palestinian refugees to their homes and lands, re-emphasizing his commitment to consolidate the Israeli occupation of the areas of the Jordan valley, including the Dead Sea, which he regarded as eastern security areas for Israel.

- In an interview with the *Al-Mushahid* magazine published on 19 February 2001, Zalman Shoval, adviser to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, reaffirmed Israel's rejection of withdrawal from the Golan as the price of peace.
- The international news agencies recently reported that Israel had announced its intention to call for tenders for the construction of 100 houses and 200 huts on the Golan Heights (June 2001).
- The newspaper *Al-Sinnara*, which is published in the occupied Arab territories, reported that large military units supported by the police had bulldozed areas of agricultural land owned by Syrian citizens. The newspaper quoted the landowners as saying that the measure was intended to prevent the population from using the land in the future. On 25 June 2001, the Israeli occupation authorities called for tenders for the construction of 300 housing units in the occupied Syrian Golan in spite of international demands for a freeze on settlement construction in order to establish peace in the region of the Middle East. According to officials at the Israeli Ministry of Housing, those new housing units would be built at the settlement of Ke'la Allon in an area close to the borders with the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon. However, Moshe Raz, a member of the Israeli Parliament who had examined the plans, admitted that the housing units constituted a new settlement.
- A left-wing member of the Israeli Parliament said that, on 25 June 2001, Israel had announced a public invitation to tender for the construction of 38 housing units at the settlement of Maaleh Adumim to the north of Jerusalem in the West Bank and had also invited contracting companies to undertake other work for the construction of 100 dwellings and 220 rooms for tourists in the Jewish settlements on the Golan Heights which Israel had occupied in 1967 and annexed in 1981. The Member of Parliament, Moshe Raz from the left-wing opposition party Meretz, told Agence France-Presse that the invitation to tender supplemented other similar invitations issued during the previous month in connection with the construction of 496 housing units at the same settlements and since Sharon had become Prime Minister in March, other calls for tenders had previously been issued for the construction of 212 housing units at the settlement of Alfei Menasheh to the east of Qalqiliya in the northern part of the West Bank.
- On 11 July 2001, the international news agencies reported that Ariel Sharon, the Israeli Prime Minister, had commended the settlement operations in the occupied Syrian Golan and called for their expansion. During the inauguration of a studies centre at Katzrin, one of the largest Israeli settlement blocs in the occupied Golan, Sharon had described the settlement of that area as one of the most important events and successes in the history of Zionism. He went on to say that the expansion of settlements and the installation of new settlers was the only way to consolidate the occupation of the Golan and turn it into what he called an 'irreversible situation'. If, one day, the Syrian Arab Republic

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wished to negotiate, the negotiations would be unconditional. The two sides would sit down at the table and each would submit its demands. That was the way to negotiate.

• In a further attempt to violate Syrian Arab national sovereignty over the Golan, the occupation authorities brought in a large number of mercenaries from the so-called 'South Lebanon Army' and attempted to settle them in the Golan following their retreat, together with the Israeli occupation forces, from southern Lebanon in the face of the blows struck by the heroic Lebanese resistance. Their settlement therein was categorically rejected by the inhabitants of the Golan, who issued a declaration stating that 'we reject the presence in the Golan of these lackeys, who desecrate our Syrian Arab land'.

The authorities in power in Israel are taking these and other measures as part of their political approach aimed at imposing new faits accomplis on the ground in an attempt to improve their negotiating position and obtain a high price for Israel's future relinquishment of the territory. Until that time, Israeli officials and the settlers in the Golan believe that any expenditure on settlement projects constitutes recoverable costs. With regard to the ideological aspect of settlement in the Golan, there is a clearly evident bias in favour of the pragmatic objectives of the Government and the settlers, which are being exploited internally and abroad for various purposes.

"C. Expropriation of land and water

"The occupation authorities have curtailed the area cultivated by Syrians from 14,000 hectares in 1966 to 6,400 hectares in 1987. They have confiscated agricultural land and forbidden grazing while at the same time encouraging the settlers to produce meat, milk and fish and establish numerous light industries such as the manufacture of electric and electronic equipment, plastics, furniture, heating appliances and wine. The Israeli authorities have also expanded their tourist-related activities and installations.

"Since agricultural production constitutes the basic source of livelihood for the population of the Golan living in the occupied villages (Majdal Shams, Mas'ada, Buq'ata, Ain Qunya and al-Ghajar), from the beginning of the occupation of the Golan in 1967 the Israeli occupation authorities have engaged in the following practices:

(a) Progressive encroachment on the land belonging to those villages and harassment of their Syrian Arab population;

(b) Confiscation of hundreds of dunums of land on security pretexts in order to turn them into minefields, thereby exposing the farmers to constant danger;

(c) Fencing off of areas of land for military purposes, such as shooting ranges, military manoeuvres and construction of roads and military installations;

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(d) Denial of access by the Syrian Arab population of the occupied villages to the water resources

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available in those villages. For example, they are prevented from making use of the water in Lake Mas'ada, which is being diverted to the Israeli settlements in the Golan;

(e) It is prohibited for the population to bore artesian wells and even to construct reservoirs for the collection of rainwater and snow even though numerous wells are being bored for the benefit of nearby settlements, as a result of which the ground-water level in the villages has dropped;

(f) The Israeli occupation authorities have deliberately reduced the price of apples, which constitute the main item of agricultural production in the occupied villages, to its lowest level. They also levy exorbitant charges and taxes, amounting to a minimum of about \$20 per ton, for the transport and marketing of the apple harvest;

(g) For the second time, the Israel Lands Administration has uprooted plum trees belonging to an Arab citizen of the Golan on the pretext that the ownership of the land (covering an area of 4 dunums) on which he had planted them was disputed.

"With regard to water, the Israeli occupation authorities are continuing to pursue their aggressive policy against the population and the environment by:

- Expropriating the surface and ground water in the Golan and selling it to Syrian Arab citizens at high prices, thereby threatening the livelihood of farmers by making it impossible for them to irrigate their crops;
- Detonating explosive charges in the Golan, thereby devastating the land and causing its water resources to seep underground.

"All these practices are greatly accelerating the pace of environmental degradation to the detriment of the Arab population of the occupied territories.

"Prior to 1967, the population of the Golan relied for its water needs (for household and agricultural purposes and in order to water its livestock) on springs, wells and lakes, particularly Lake Mas'ada (Ram), the storage capacity of which was increased from about 600,000 m³ to about 3 million m³ after Israel made some improvements to the shores of the lake and installed a pumping station and a network of pipes to distribute the water to the settlements, while allocating only a limited quantity of the water from the lake to the Syrian population. Since the Golan depends on underground resources for its supply of drinking water, the Israeli company Mekorot bored six wells to supply the settlements. In view of the system of severe racial discrimination from which the Syrian population is suffering by not being allowed to bore wells, some of them resorted to the construction of open reservoirs to collect rainwater.

However, the Israeli authorities have demolished some of the reservoirs and have installed meters on owners in order to levy exorbitant charges for water consumption.

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"According to the available information, in 2000 there were about 17,000 settlers distributed among 43

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settlements in the occupied Golan, and more than 20,000 Syrians, approximately half of whom were living in the village of Majdal Shams. Water consumption in the Golan currently amounts to about 50 million m^3 /year, of which about 8 million m^3 is allocated to the Syrians (i.e. 400 m^3 per person per year) for all uses while the 17,000 settlers consume about 42 million m^3 /year (i.e. 2,470 m^3 per person per year, equivalent to more than six times the consumption of the Syrian citizens living in the occupied Golan). There are two water supply systems in the Golan; the first, in the northern Golan, depends on Lake Ram and springs, cisterns and wells, while the other, in the southern Golan, depends on springs, wells and water pumped from Lake Tiberias and the lower Yarmouk River. Nevertheless, the current water consumption in the Golan (50 million m^3) is far less than the Syrian Arab Republic's expected quota of water from the upper Jordan River due to Israel's practice of discriminating between Syrian citizens and Jewish settlers with a view to making it difficult for the Syrians to earn a livelihood and forcing them to submit to Israeli laws.

"D. Taxation

"This can be summarized as a policy of economic strangulation in all fields and the imposition of numerous taxes which, as a general principle, are levied on everything. These taxes, which are many times higher than those paid by Israeli citizens, cover all aspects of life. For example, there is a tax on the possession of a household radio or television (US\$ 20), a house tax and taxes on income and property, as well as a tax in respect of sickness, the local council and national insurance, and value-added tax.

"The occupation authorities take 17 per cent of any income obtained by citizens, and taxes are collected at regular intervals in a violent manner. For example, the owner of an ordinary motor vehicle has to pay an amount equivalent to \$2,200 per year simply in order to be allowed to drive it, quite apart from the other taxes and dues that are payable, and \$500 is levied in respect of each agricultural tractor. There are also taxes on agricultural crops. For example, \$100 is payable in respect of a two-ton truckload of apples and \$300 to \$400 in respect of a similar load of cherries, and a further tax of 17 per cent is levied when they reach the wholesaler. The population is also forced to pay annually for land insurance, regardless of whether the harvest is good or bad.

"The occupation authorities exercise arbitrary control over construction and refuse to authorize any expansion plans for the villages in the occupied Golan, all of which are suffering from an acute shortage of land for construction. In the occupied Golan, the issuance of construction permits has to be approved by an Israeli intelligence officer known as Yitzhak and his assistant Meroz. The overall aim of the high taxation is to attempt to subjugate the population through economic strangulation. A tax of \$2,000 is imposed in respect of every house built without a permit and the authorities demolish the house if the amount is not paid. The occupation authorities also impose a tax on students attending Damascus

University, who are not allowed to go there until they have paid numerous taxes, the purpose of which is to harass the Syrian Arab population by extorting money from them in an attempt to induce them to abandon their higher education. In addition, Arabic language books are subject to exorbitant taxes, from which Hebrew books are exempt.

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"The authorities also impose exorbitant taxes in respect of access to the irrigation network, these taxes amounting to \$1,500 for the irrigation of each dunum of land, even though the water originates from the land of Syrian citizens, who even have to pay for the water that comes from cisterns and reservoirs that they have constructed on their land, an amount of \$1.00 being levied on each cubic metre of irrigation water, in addition to the taxes on agricultural crops which, together with the cost of tending the land and harvesting, is equivalent to the value of the crop.

"E. Economic attrition of the land and the population

"Hundreds of Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan have abandoned agricultural work after losing their land due to the lack of water, because of their inability to compete in the domestic market with the settlement crops which are subsidized by the Israeli occupation authorities or because of the obstacles impeding their purchase of agricultural requisites or the export of their produce. From time to time, the Israeli occupation forces uproot fruit trees and move arable earth from the remaining five villages inhabited by Syrian citizens to the Israeli settlements. The Israeli occupation authorities also confiscate livestock, confine grazing to areas in the immediate vicinity of the villages in the Syrian Golan and impose a tax on livestock, as a result of which the Syrian citizens of the Golan are forced to sell their flocks and herds which constitute the source of their livelihood.

"Industrial projects require funding, which the Israeli occupation authorities make available only to the settlers, and trade also requires capital, governmental facilities, freedom of movement and external contacts, none of which are available to Syrian citizens. There are also exorbitant and arbitrarily assessed municipal, habitation and insurance taxes which alone consume more than half the income of industrialists and traders, quite apart from the income, national insurance, compulsory loan and other personal taxes levied on property owners. The inevitable result of the Israeli occupation authorities' deliberate introduction of this wide array of taxes has been to limit the potential for industrial and commercial development, the aim of this policy being to weaken the economy of the Golan, make it dependent on the Israeli economy and lower the standard of living in order to induce the population of the occupied Syrian Golan to abandon their lands.

"Syrian citizens are denied access to employment in governmental and public institutions which, since their establishment, were intended to benefit only the settlers. The Israeli occupation authorities invoke security considerations, as well as the fact that the majority of the Syrian population are unfamiliar with the Hebrew language, as a pretext for refusing to employ them in governmental and public institutions. Hence, we find that the number of persons holding governmental jobs is very limited, being confined to some teachers at Arab schools and some officials at institutions dealing with Syrian citizens. Moreover, the Israeli public security departments always withdraw the work permits of Syrian citizens who refuse to collaborate with the Israeli occupation authorities.

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"These practices have unquestionably worsened the critical economic situation prevailing in the occupied Syrian Golan due to the occupation and its practices, particularly since the standard of living of

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the Syrian population is well below the poverty line. In fact, the occupied Syrian Golan has been turned into a reservoir of cheap labour, a source of taxes for the Israeli treasury and a market for Israeli exports.

"Agriculture, the population's basic source of livelihood, and particularly apples, their principal crop, are the main target of these practices consisting in the uprooting of trees, restriction of the area under cultivation, obstruction of its expansion, imposition of exorbitant taxes on crops, increases in the prices of pesticides, prevention of the population from boring wells or using the groundwater on their land, imposition of fines on, and finally prohibition of, the reservoirs and cisterns which the population construct to collect rainwater for use in the irrigation of their land, and the sale of irrigation water at exorbitant prices to the population.

"The devastation and economic attrition to which the land is being subjected by the Israeli occupation forces was highlighted recently, at the beginning of July, when they burned extensive areas (estimated at more than 50,000 m²) of forest and orchard land in the occupied Shabaa farms area in order to further strengthen and fortify their positions in that area. They were also responsible for similar fires on the agricultural land of our people in the occupied Golan.

"The newspaper *Al-Bayadir al-Siyasi*, which is published in the occupied Arab territories, reported that the Israeli occupation forces were continuing their acts of aggression against our people and their property in the occupied Golan. In its edition published on 11 July 2001, the newspaper reported that, 11 days earlier, occupation forces had burned an area to the east of the village of Buq'ata, as a result of which extensive plots of cultivated and grazing land were destroyed and the inhabitants of Buq'ata were forced to spend the entire night trying to extinguish the fire and save their crops.

"Israeli occupation forces also set fire to extensive areas of land to the east of the village of Mas'ada in the occupied Golan.

"In southern Lebanon, security sources reported that military bulldozers and earth-moving equipment were fortifying two Israeli positions at Magharr Shabaa and Fashkoul in the Shabaa farms area and surrounding them with earth embankments. On the previous day, a military crane and five large trucks loaded with cement blocks had been despatched to the position at Ramta and began to erect a cement wall at the south-eastern corner of that position. Israeli occupation forces also set fire to extensive areas of forests and olive groves in the occupied Lebanese Shabaa farms area.

"The national information agency reported that the area of about 50,000 m² which had been set ablaze in those farms ran from Zabdin in the west to the ski resort in the east. It went on to say that the purpose of setting fire to that land was to eliminate the trees, which provided useful shelter for members of the resistance in their operations against the occupation army in the area, and to facilitate the occupation army's land and air reconnaissance and observation operations.

"The owners of those farms appealed to the international emergency forces to ensure the prompt cessation of that Israeli crime.

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"F. The situation of the Syrian Arab workers

"Israel has engaged in numerous practices against workers, farmers and dentists in the villages of the occupied Golan whom it has prevented from travelling to the Syrian Arab Republic to participate in the trade-union congresses, which are held on a regular basis, after we had given approval for them to attend. Israel announced that it would permit only elderly persons and university students to visit the Syrian Arab Republic. However, the only elderly persons whom it allows to visit the Syrian Arab Republic are collaborators who comply with its orders, such permission being denied to elderly persons who reject the occupation and refuse to submit to Israel's policy and orders.

"Although male and female Syrian Arab citizens living under the occupation used to be allowed to visit the Syrian Arab Republic about twice a year, Israel is currently refusing to approve any applications for such visits.

"Through the heads and members of the notorious local councils whom they appoint in each village, the Israeli authorities in the occupied Golan Heights are pursuing a hostile policy towards factory and construction workers, particularly those who resist the occupation and adopt a sound nationalist attitude in keeping with national objectives, while welcoming citizens who collaborate with Israeli institutions and the occupation authorities in the occupied Golan.

"The deplorable situation from which Syrian Arab citizens are suffering as a result of the ongoing arbitrary practices of the Israeli occupation authorities is continuing and the sufferings of workers, as detailed in the reports for previous years, have not been alleviated. In fact, their sufferings can be said to have increased due to the continuous acts of aggression and the domineering attitudes with which the Israeli authorities are attempting to exercise hegemony over the Syrian Arab population living under the occupation. Workers constitute a sizeable proportion of the Syrian population of the occupied Golan, most of whom depended on forms of agricultural work. However, the majority have been forced to abandon their agricultural work due to the policy of economic strangulation pursued by the occupation authorities, who are imposing exorbitant taxes, reducing the prices of crops and increasing those of agricultural requisites, etc., thereby forcing the workers to enter the clandestine labour market and engage in physically strenuous and laborious jobs such as cleaning, construction and miscellaneous services. The overall situation of the Syrian Arab workers in the Golan, who are being exploited in various ways, can be summarized as follows:

(a) Low wages, amounting to less than half the wage paid to Israeli workers;

(b) Physically strenuous, arduous or hazardous work;

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(c) They work long hours, with overtime, in order to earn a living, even though their wages are low in relation to the high cost of living (the Israeli authorities have set the poverty line at a monthly wage of 7,000 shekels and therefore, with a monthly income of no more than 4,000 shekels, an Arab worker lives

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at just above half the poverty level while the income of any ordinary Israeli worker is never less than 10,000 shekels).

- Israeli employers pay no compensation for occupational injuries to any Arab worker from the Golan or elsewhere, as a result of which the worker's family is faced with a major problem of subsistence if he is unable to work.
- Unemployment, from which Syrian and other Arab workers suffer, is a perennial problem in view of the fact that workers are never insured and are under constant threat of dismissal.
- In addition, the Israeli occupation authorities impose taxes on workers' wages and anyone who fails to pay is stopped on his way to or from work at the checkpoints set up for workers, such as the checkpoint on the main road at Banyas. Workers are required to pay all the outstanding taxes under threat of having their property impounded and confiscated if they fail to do so.

"The manner in which workers are exploited is illustrated by the fact that employees at the Ain Qunya nursery school are obliged to sign declarations accepting reduced financial entitlements and compensation.

"G. The policy of systematic intellectual stultification and cultural and historical distortion

"The education policy that Israel is pursuing in regard to our people in the Golan and Palestine can be truly and accurately described as a policy of systematic intellectual stultification and an attempt to obliterate their Arab identity by imposing Zionist concepts and values on them. The objective of the Israeli curriculum is to undermine and destroy the Arab national identity of the Syrian Arab students in the Golan, merge them in Israeli society through culture and modes of thought and behaviour and sever their close, time-honoured links with their Syrian motherland and their Arab nation.

"1. The school curriculum

"The Israeli curriculum has been imposed and Arab history has been distorted following the abolition of the Syrian Arab curriculum from the schools in the Golan in the academic year 1967/68 immediately after the occupation. This constituted a flagrant violation of the human rights and the national cultural identity of the Syrian Arabs in the occupied Golan insofar as the Israeli curriculum which replaced the Arabic curricula is attempting to destroy the sense of national identity of the students in the occupied Golan through the imposition of an alien culture and modes of thought and behaviour, as is clearly evident from the following examples:

• In Arabic language classes, emphasis is placed on texts which portray inter-tribal feuds, fanaticism and scenes of bloodshed, highlight scandalous erotic poetry and disregard the most famous poets and literary figures.

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(b) In geography classes, Arabic place names are changed to Hebrew names. For example:

1. Tiberias becomes Lake Kinneret; Jabal al-Hariq becomes Mount Hiron; Hawwa Valley becomes Mishushim Valley; Abu al-Nada Hill becomes Har Avital; Mount Ajloun becomes Mount Gilead; the Bsharre cedar forest becomes Solomon's cedar forest.

Considerable emphasis is also placed on the territorial and confessional distribution of the population and on expressions, such as "Middle East", which negate the unity of the Arab World.

(c) In history classes, events that took place in ancient and modern Arab history are presented in a maliciously selective and falsified manner. For example, the Arabs are portrayed solely as nomads and Arab civilization in China and in Mesopotamia, Egypt and Syria in the pre-Islamic period is disregarded. A further example can be found in the sixth-grade primary history textbook which states that the Caliph Abdul Malik ibn Marwan built the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock in 691 AD during his war with Ibn al-Zubair in order to entice people away from the pilgrimage to Mecca. This is intended to give the impression that those two sites are not Muslim holy places since they were built for reasons linked to that internecine conflict.

Yet another example of historical falsification can be found in a book entitled *The Geography of the Middle East* which states that, when the world became concerned about the fate of the antiquities in the temple of Abu Simbel, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) appointed an investigative commission to save them. However, it is well known that, in actual fact, it was the Egyptian Government which appealed to the world to save those antiquities and supervised their protection.

(d) Heritage classes are designed to promote confessional distinctions by inventing a special heritage for each community in our homogeneous Arab society.

"2. School books and teaching staff

"The policy of the Israeli occupation authorities in this regard has not changed since the occupation in 1967. Its sole purpose is to obliterate Arab national identity by imposing Israeli educational curricula and the Hebrew language and focusing on Hebrew history and literature and to justify Israel's aggressive policy. To this end, the authorities employ unqualified teaching staff from the five villages and refuse to appoint competent graduates of Syrian universities as teachers. From time to time, they also dismiss and terminate the contracts of Arab teachers who attempt to instil a sense of Arab nationalism in the students. The aim of this policy is to exclude any national patriotic feelings towards the Syrian motherland from the educational process and to create a weak sense of identity through the promotion of confessionalism.

"3. University education

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"Students in the occupied Golan are being prevented from receiving a university education through the requirement that every student wishing to study at Syrian universities must pay an amount of \$50 when submitting an application and also whenever they return after the summer holiday. This amount is not reimbursable if the student's application is rejected. Students are also subjected to harassment and ill-treatment at the crossing point at Quneitra and those travelling home for the summer holiday are not permitted to bring presents for their families. In addition, the occupation authorities impose annual school fees equivalent to \$1,000 per student at the secondary level and the conditions laid down for admission to Israeli universities are impossible to meet in view of the high annual tuition fees, amounting to more than \$7,000 per student. Those universities are continuing their policy of racial discrimination against Arab students. Moreover, Syrian students are not allowed to study certain subjects such as dentistry, pharmacy and law unless they hold Israeli citizenship. Hence, it is impossible for students from the occupied Golan to enter those universities.

"4. The cultural situation

"This too is being constantly undermined by the Israeli policy of hegemony aimed at obliterating the national culture of the Syrian Arab citizens in the occupied Golan and isolating them from their Arab nation and their fellow Arab citizens by restricting cultural activities in general and preventing the regular publication of newspapers and magazines.

"In the archaeological field, antiquities have been seized from 211 archaeological sites and uncovered in the occupied Golan, as the occupation authorities have themselves admitted in the information media. These finds, together with other antiquities, have been moved to Israeli museums or acquired by various Israeli individuals and institutions. In addition, the media falsely ascribe many of these sites, in an emphatic and misleading manner, to the Jews and the so-called 'ancient Jewish State'.

"It is evident, therefore, that the educational and cultural situation of our Syrian Arab citizens and students living under Israeli occupation forms part of Israel's overall policy of obliterating the identity of the Arabs in order to marginalize, dominate and control them and abort any incipient resistance. This is rejected by our citizens in the occupied Golan, by our brothers in the other occupied Arab territories and by the Syrian motherland in an Arab patriotic and nationalist stand that is both proud and steadfast.

"H. The health situation of the Arab population of the occupied Golan

"The five occupied Arab villages are suffering from an acute shortage of health centres and medical clinics. Since there is no hospital in these villages, any of their inhabitants who require even simple surgical operations are obliged to travel to towns outside the Golan, such as Nazareth, Safad or Jerusalem, at great expense. They are suffering constantly in this regard due to the shortage of first-aid centres, physicians and specialized medical clinics, even though they are taxed in respect of the sickness and the hospitals and health centres that do not exist in their villages. Although our citizens have established a medical complex of their own at Majdal Shams which provides basic essential services, it does not compensate for the lack of a hospital. Our citizens are charged high prices for medication and

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the occupation authorities force everyone to take out health insurance with the Kupat Holim sickness fund, which charges high premiums in return for basic health services, the cost of which is covered by a part of those premiums.

"Our citizens in the occupied Arab villages are living in difficult conditions due to the low standard of health care and the obstacles that are placed in the way of any local initiatives to improve the health situation and meet the minimum requirements in this field. The aim of this policy is to force the Arab population to deal with Israeli health institutions, accept the fait accompli and submit to the Israeli annexation decision. The main features of the health situation in the villages of the Golan can be summarized as follows:

- (a) There is no hospital in the Golan to provide health services for the Arab population;
- (b) There is no laboratory to carry out medical analyses;
- (c) There is no gynaecological or maternity clinic;
- (d) There are no radiographic facilities;
- (e) There is no first-aid centre to treat emergency cases;
- (f) There are no specialized (gastrointestinal, ophthalmic, ENT, neurological, etc.) medical clinics;
- (g) The health situation in general is suffering from neglect and lack of concern.

"I. Destruction and pollution of the environment and defacement of the natural landscape.

"The Israeli occupation authorities continued to violate all international laws and norms in the occupied Arab territories and Israel's nuclear facilities still constitute a source of real nuclear terror in the region since they are not subject to any international control or supervision and, consequently, the waste from those facilities poses a serious threat to the environment and the population. These violations by the occupation authorities are best illustrated by the fact that, on 26 November 2000, the Israeli paint company Tambour stockpiled 1,500 barrels of radioactive substances (referred to as 'paint') in warehouses in the village of Majdal Shams after an earlier attempt to send them to southern Jordan was rejected by the Jordanian Government. Our citizens in the Golan also rejected those substances and forced the company and the authorities colluding with it to remove them from the occupied Golan.

"The numerous ways in which the occupation authorities, and particularly their military forces, are destroying the environment and defacing the natural landscape of the occupied territory of the Golan are exemplified by the following:

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- (a) The holding of training exercises and manoeuvres inside, or in the vicinity of, nature reserves, as a result of which the vegetation has been burned, fires have broken out and spread and those reserves have been virtually reduced to ashes. For example, in June 1993, training exercises led to the outbreak of three fires that destroyed about 3,000 dunums of natural forest land most of which was in the area of Fiq in the southern part of the Golan;
- (b) Damage to archaeological sites and relics, which had remained virtually intact for thousands of years, due to the movement of tanks and the impact of armour-piercing shells and various types of explosives;
- (c) Random firing at landmarks and signposts;
- (d) The careless and uncontrolled construction of roads for military purposes, which has led to the disfigurement of natural areas and destroyed the superstructure of many sites due to the failure to respect the conditions for road construction;
- (e) The removal of artefacts from archaeological sites, such as the marble decorations on the walls of sites and the valuable icons in the Golan church which date from the fourth century AD;
- (f) The excavation of graves in the search for gold artefacts;
- (g) The bulldozing of orchards and forests and the burning by settlers of farms owned by Syrian citizens, which has led to degradation of the local environment ;
- (h) The burial, by the Israeli authorities, of toxic chemical waste on land belonging to the Syrian village of Majdal Shams and in the Lebanese Shabaa area following the failure of their attempt to export that waste to Jordan when its true nature was discovered by the Jordanian authorities (that radioactive waste, which was subsequently returned to Israel is now being sold as ' paint constituents' to the Arab population);
- (i) The laying of mines in the territory of the Golan, as a result of which cattle, sheep and other livestock belonging to Syrian farmers have been killed and local residents are unable to farm or utilize their land;
- (j) Although it is well known that agricultural production constitutes the basic source of livelihood of the population of the occupied villages of the Golan (Majdal Shams, Mas'ada, Buq'ata, Ain Qunya and al-Ghajar), the Israel Lands Administration has, for the second time, uprooted the plum trees belonging to an Arab citizen of the Golan;

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The occupation authorities' use of depleted uranium in southern Lebanon is confirmed by the increased number of cases of leukaemia at hospitals in the southern Lebanese town of Sidon. Israel's dumping of nuclear waste in the Mediterranean also poses the alarming threat of environmental disasters in the light of data confirming the daily increasing dangers inherent in the Israeli nuclear facilities and

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the waste that they generate, particularly as none of those facilities are subject to any international control, not even by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Regional and international organizations have reported that Israeli factories are still disposing of their toxic waste at a number of locations in the occupied Syrian Golan and the occupied West Bank, and a report published by the Mid-East Realities organization has confirmed that there are not less than 50 locations at which toxic waste is being dumped in the West Bank.

“J. Destruction of built-up areas and looting of property

“Following the occupation of the territory in 1967, the occupation authorities destroyed 244 villages and built-up areas in the Golan and expelled their population, sparing only five villages (Majdal Shams, Buq’ata, Ain Qunya, Mas’ada and al-Ghajar). Not even places of worship, schools and health centres escaped destruction. The underlying aim of the occupation authorities was to eliminate Arab landmarks and obliterate the Arab identity of the Golan, as a result of which anyone who visits the Golan today is able to identify the locations of the former Arab villages only from their ruins.

“At a seminar organized by the Middle East Studies Center in Washington, D.C., Helena Cobban, a British author specialized in Middle Eastern affairs, said that during her most recent visit to the Golan in 1998 she had met several displaced persons from the Golan at the locations in which they had been concentrated and discovered that their number amounted to about half a million (it had previously been estimated at 157,000-164,000 in 1967 when the Israeli occupation authorities evicted them from their villages, which were reduced to rubble as could clearly be seen by anyone who visited the remnants of their villages and destroyed homes in the Golan).

“Cobban said that those displaced persons remained emotionally attached to their towns and villages in the Golan, to which they were eagerly yearning to return. In the United States, there was talk of the material cost of removing the settlers from the Golan, but no thought was given to those families who had been forced to leave the Golan more than 30 years ago and among whom an entire generation had grown up outside its towns and villages, all of whom, together with their children, remained attached to their homes which had been destroyed by the occupation forces.

“It is noteworthy that the Israeli occupation authorities transformed many of the villages into agricultural land and projects or surrounded them with trees in order to hide their ruins. The stones from the houses that they destroyed were used for various military purposes, such as the construction of positions and fortifications. In addition, losses were suffered due to the looting of property (crops, livestock, projects, furniture, equipment and machinery, etc.). For example, Israelis looted the goods that they found in commercial establishments at Quneitra and in the villages of the Golan, expropriated herds of cattle and flocks of sheep and goats (there were about half a million head of livestock in the territory at that time) and also seized hundreds of thousands of tonnes of agricultural produce.

“K. Excavation and looting of antiquities

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"The Golan prior to the Israeli aggression in 1967

"The territory of the Golan is rich in archaeological sites dating from the Stone Age to the early, middle and late Bronze Ages, the classical period and even the Arab Islamic period. This development, wealth and cultural continuity throughout the ages is attributable to the wide variety of natural factors which encouraged settled life in the region from ancient times to the present day, particularly its fertile plains, slopes, mountains and valleys ranging in elevation from 2,814 m at the summit of Jabal al-Sheikh/Mount Hermon to 212 m below sea level on the eastern shores of Lake Tiberias. The territory is rich in springs (the sources of the Jordan and Yarmouk rivers), rivers and lakes (the Jordan River, Lake Houleh and Lake Tiberias in the west and the Yarmouk river in the south), as well as valleys with abundant water in winter and spring and copious snow and rainfall (an average of 750 mm per year). The Golan also occupies a central strategic position, constituting a hub for communications between the geographical regions of Greater Syria (Syria, Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan).

"The Golan aroused the interest of European explorers in the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. The most eminent travellers who visited the Golan and documented some of the visible archaeological sites scattered throughout its territory were U. J. Seetzen in 1806, J. L. Burckhardt (Sheikh Ibrahim) in 1810, J. Buckingham in 1816, L. Oliphant in 1879 and the German engineer G. Schumacher in 1883.

"The archaeological finds that are preserved in the National Museum in Damascus and at the Department of Antiquities in Quneitra show that the Golan was continuously inhabited and developed by the same peoples who lived in the natural regions of Greater Syria, such as the Natufians, followed by Amorites, Canaanites, Aramaeans, Nabataeans, Ituraeans, Ghassanids and other Arab tribes. The Golan also played an important role in Arab Islamic history. Its plains around the Yarmouk witnessed the first violent battles against the Byzantines, following which the Muslim Arabs were able to conquer Syria and subsequently the other neighbouring countries. In addition, the Golan played a prominent role during the struggle against the crusaders, the Ottoman occupation and the French mandate over Syria.

"From this evidence, it can be concluded that one of the principal characteristics of the Golan is that it constitutes a connecting link between the civilizations of northern and southern Syria and, historically, is associated with the successive civilizations of the Syrian motherland which covered the entire geographical area of the Golan.

"Archaeological exploration in the governorate of Quneitra (Golan)

"Since only limited casual archaeological excavations have been carried out in the Golan, most of the available data are derived from the results of superficial archaeological surveys. The most important of these were probably those carried out in 1880 by the explorer Schumacher who published the results of his work in his book entitled *The Golan* and subsequently in his second book entitled *Transjordan*. Schumacher also drew up the first detailed archaeological map of the Golan. Although he did not engage in systematic archaeological excavations in the true sense of the term, he documented, described and

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sketched the archaeological sites, ruins and relics that he visited during his field trips and, therefore, the information recorded by Schumacher still constitutes the basic source of our knowledge concerning the (n.

"Following the setback on 5 June 1967, the Zionist occupation authorities, represented by archaeological and university departments, carried out intensive archaeological exploration, survey and excavation operations for which a large number of archaeologists in various fields of specialization were mobilized in an attempt to discover tangible evidence proving that the Golan was the land of Bashan, Maacah and Geshur mentioned in the books of the Old Testament and, consequently, to justify the occupation and annexation of the territory. Did the Zionist State discover such evidence? The answer is no, as will be seen from the following pages based on the results published by archaeological departments in the Zionist entity.

"From Schumacher's time (1880) to the present day, a total of 209 archaeological sites from various historical periods have been discovered. These sites, listed in historical sequence, include: 15 sites containing relics from the latter part of the middle Bronze Age (2000-1500 BC); only 6 sites containing relics from the late Bronze Age (1500-1200 BC); 4 sites containing archaeological remains from the Hellenic period in the time of Alexander the Great and his successors (fourth to first centuries BC); 98 sites containing relics from the Roman (first century BC to fourth century AD) and Byzantine (fourth to seventh centuries AD) periods; and 72 sites dating from the Arab Islamic periods (seventh to nineteenth centuries AD).

"The most noteworthy aspect in this regard is the total absence of relics from the Iron Age (1200-500 BC), during which the Israelites left Egypt and settled in Palestine in the time of Moses. It was the age in which David established his kingdom (about 1000 BC) and in which the kingdom of Solomon flourished (about 900 BC). There is also a lack of relics from the period of the Persian occupation of Syria during the fifth and fourth centuries BC, which was the period in which the Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity.

"This means that the periods from which material relics have been found in the Golan are the Byzantine period (98 sites) and the Arab Islamic periods (72 sites).

"The archaeological sites that have been explored or excavated are: al-Ghajar; Tal al-Hamra; Khirbat al-Duweir; Jubbata al-Zeit; Sahita; Nakhila; Ain Qunya; Tal al-Azariya; Khirab al-Sawada; Ain Fit; Khirbat Ra'abana; Za'oura; al-Hamidiya; Sumaqa; al-Hajf; Bab al-Hawa or Tal al-Gharam; Mansoura; Khirbat al-Makhfi; Khirbat al-Fureish; al-Luhayat or Kharjiyat; Ain al-Harra; al-Qala'; Qatrana; Sukeik; al-Fawqa; Khirab al-Maghabir; al-Husseiniya; Qafira; Baidaris; al-Ghassaniya; Wasit; al-Quneitra; al-Bajja; al-Adnaniya; Surman; Kafr Naffakh; Khuweija; Anja'a; Ain al-'Alq; Dalhamiya; Dabboura; 'Uleiq; Tal Ukkasha; al-Ramthaniya; al-Danqala; Ghadiriya; Northern 'Uweinat; Deir Sirdas; Southern 'Uweinat; Na'ran; al-Dahsha; Ain Simsim; Sheikh Marzouq; al-Dabiya; Tal al-Mithaniya; Ghadir al-Nuhas; Sanabir; Fakhoura; Ahmadiya; Amoudiya; Salouqiya; Ain al-Awra; al-Manshiya; al-Sur; Khashina; Abu Fula; al-Dawra; Qasrain; Tannouriya; Faraj; Rafid; Isha; Tal al-Faras; Seir al-Khirfan: al-

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Majami'; Ya'rubiya; Deir Mufaddal; Jiraba; Butmiya; Durr Dara; Tal al-Bazouk; Rajm al-Hawa; Qubbat Qar'a; Umm Khashaba; Hazzan; al-Tal; Shabba; Tal al-Jukhdar; Rasm Bab al-Hawa; Ain Hamoud; Ma'at Kanaf; Khukha; Jarnaya; Mazra'at al-Quneitra; Jamiya; Kariz al-Wadi; Shaqif; Matsarqawi; Khirbat al-Majdouliya; Bajouriya; Tal al-Saqi; Kafr 'Uqb; Deir Aziz; al-Qasabiya; al-Safira; al-Saghira; Khisfin; Ain al-Safira; Umm al-Qanatir; Lawiya; al-Sabahiya; Umrat al-Firanj; al-Mintar; Sheikh Khidr; Tal Abu al-Zeitoun; Khirbat al-Majahiya; Adisa; Khirbat Dajajiya; al-Al; Shakoum; Bir al-Shaqoum; Suqoufiya; Tal Abu Mudawwar; al-Bardawil (Qasr Bardawil); Khirbat Ta'ina; Rajm Zaki (Rajm Zanki); Rasm al-Yaqousa; Kafr Harib; al-Yaqousa; Jibin; Dawr al-Lowz; Fiq; Hathil; Khirbat Sihan; Rajm Fiq; al-Uyoun (Khirbat Uyoun); al-'Iyada; al-Nasiriya; Khan al-Ahmar; Khirbat Tawafiq; al-Fawqa; Khan al-Aqaba, Talil; Sa'id; Ain Sa'id; Ain Umm al-Adam; al-Safouriya; al-Dabbousiya; Khirbat al-Duweir; Tal al-Thurayya.

"Israeli acts of aggression against antiquities in the Golan

"Following the aggression on 5 June 1967 and the occupation of the Golan by Israeli forces, Israeli archaeologists embarked on the task of justifying the occupation and committed repeated acts of aggression against Syrian Arab cultural property in the Golan, which constitutes the south-western region of the Syrian Arab Republic, in total disregard of the international conventions that prohibit such illegal acts in occupied territory. They conducted surveys and excavations and committed many acts of devastation in the occupied territory, causing tremendous damage to its antiquities. They relied initially on the surveys of the early explorers, particularly those of Schumacher, and subsequently extended their excavations to cover the entire occupied territory, and these acts of aggression against our cultural heritage are still continuing with a view to falsifying irrefutable facts and seeking untenable justifications for the ongoing aggression and for what they claim to be a 'historic right' to the so-called 'promised land'.

"The basic aims of the Israeli acts of aggression against the antiquities in the Golan

"All the archaeological activities in which the Israelis have engaged, sometimes in association with foreigners, in the occupied territories, including the Golan, are based on unfounded racist theories derived from the Torah which are totally incompatible with the actual facts. These theories, which are particularly hostile to the Arabs, are completely alien to the objective science of archaeology. The aims of these acts of aggression are, inter alia:

- To promote racist and expansionist political theories and Torah-based ideology that allegedly give the Jews exclusive rights and link the history of the Golan to events recorded in the Torah, and to deliberately suppress any evidence that contradicts those theories and concepts;
- To emphasize the Jewish presence in the Golan, particularly during the period of the alleged Jewish kingdoms in the first millennium BC; to exaggerate the extent of that presence in subsequent ages in order to attribute to the Jews a special role in the territory that would justify their aggression and expansion on the basis of erroneous interpretations that are belied by the facts established in the light of

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archaeological discoveries; and, subsequently, to attempt to rewrite the history of the territory from a racist standpoint;

- To disregard, and even attempt to obliterate, the principal archaeological sites, strata and discoveries in the Golan, and particularly antiquities dating from the Arab Islamic periods which cannot be attributed to the Jews;
- To cast doubt on the historical and cultural identity of the Arabs in an attempt to prove the expansionist theory of the originators of the Zionist movement ('A land with a people for a people without a land') in order to deny the Arab presence and, thereby, justify the establishment of the Zionist entity and its expansionist activities.

"Israeli aggressive practices in the Golan

"The aggressive practices of the Israeli occupation authorities have assumed numerous forms, including all types of archaeological surveys, investigations, explorations and excavations, the removal and analysis of specimens and the theft, defacement and destruction of movable and immovable cultural property by civilian and military bodies in and outside Israel.

"These Israeli acts of aggression are illustrated by the following measures and activities:

- Following the aggression on 5 June 1967 and during the October 1973 war, the Israeli army demolished most of the villages in the Golan, obliterated their traditional and archaeological features and used the basalt stones from which they were built to construct military fortifications.
- The Israeli army has turned many of the archaeological sites occupying strategic positions in the Golan into areas for training and target practice with various types of weapons and have even turned some of them into military emplacements, as happened in the case of the unique temple on Jabal al-Sheikh, which dates from the first millennium BC, as well as Tal Abu al-Nada and the sites around Quneitra, al-Qahtaniya, al-Adnaniya, Ufaniya, al-Kawm and al-Hamidiya.
- Israeli army officers and other military personnel have carried out clandestine excavations at archaeological sites from which they have stolen antiquities for subsequent sale.
- Israeli archaeological teams have carried out surveys and excavations at many sites in the Golan and have removed any antiquities that they discovered there to Israeli museums.
- Those teams have made every possible endeavour to distort the history of the ancient and Islamic Arab peoples who inhabited the Golan by selectively highlighting the antiquities that further their aim of writing a spurious history of the territory in a manner conducive to their interests.

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"The occupation authorities have transferred many of the antiquities to their museums, claiming them to

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be relics from Jewish sites and concealing the fact that they are Arab antiquities. For example:

- The archaeological area of Deir al-Quruh in the central Golan contains Christian Arab antiquities dating from the fourth and fifth centuries AD which the occupation authorities have attributed to so-called Jewish sites, giving the area the Hebrew name of Gamla.
- The area of Beit Siwar in the Batiha plain is an ancient Arab archaeological site which was a flourishing village in the days of Christ, three of whose disciples (Philip, Peter and his brother Andrew) came from there. Although the site contains Christian religious buildings and ordinary dwellings, Zionist propaganda falsely designates it as a Jewish site.

"The parties that have participated in acts of aggression against antiquities in the Golan

"The numerous Israeli and foreign parties that have participated in acts of aggression against antiquities in the Golan include, in particular:

- Israeli army;
- Israeli Ministry of Education and Culture;
- Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, New York;
- Golan Research Institute, Israel;
- The local council at Katzrin in the occupied Golan;
- The Hebrew University, Israel;
- Israeli Kibbutz secretariat;
- Research Department of the Kibbutz movement, Israel;
- National Council for Research and Development, Israel;
- Bar-Ilan University, Israel;
- Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology, Hebrew Union College, Jerusalem;
- Palestine Exploration Fund, London;
- Leonard and Katherine Woolley Fund, Somerville College, Oxford;

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- Thames and Hudson Company;
- Athens University.

“Antiquities stolen by Israelis in the Golan

“The heavy equipment of the Israeli army and the pickaxes of dozens of Israeli expeditions have disembowelled hundreds of Syrian Arab archaeological mounds and sites stretching from the summits and slopes of Jabal al-Sheikh in the north to the area of Quneitra and even the banks of the Yarmouk river and the al-Hamma area in the southern and south-western parts of the Golan.

“The principal archaeological sites which have been subjected to Israeli devastation include: Baniyas, Dabboura, Quneitra, al-Ghassaniya, al-Adnaniya, al-Qahtaniya, Ain Nashout, Ain Simsim, al-Fakhoura, al-Qasabiya, al-Asaliya, al-Batiha, al-Ahmadiya, Jiraba, Zeita, al-Qadiriya, Umm al-Qanatir, al-Dakka, Kanaf, Deir Quruh, al-Majhihiya, al-Ya’rubiya, Fiq, Khisfin, al-Al, al-Hamma, Rajm al-Hawa, Deir Sirdas, al-Jawiza, al-Khashiniya, al-Ramthaniya, Dabiya, al-Faraj, al-Rafid, Kafr al-Ma, Sukoufiya, al-Kursi, Qal’at al-Hisn, Qal’at Nimrod, Juba, Musahhira, Kafr Nasij and many other archaeological sites.

NB: Al-Hamidiya, Hadhar, Quneitra, al-Rafid and al-Qasabiya are sites that have been liberated.

“L. The policy of repression, blockade and detention of the population

“The Israelis are continuing their murderous criminal practices of torture, coercion, deprivation, detention, imprisonment and restricted residence against the Syrian Arab population of the occupied Golan and have not hesitated to use barbaric methods of torture, such as whipping, electric shocks, ripping out of fingernails and toenails and deprivation of food and water, which are rejected by the international community and condemned by the Geneva Conventions and United Nations principles and human rights instruments.

“There is not a single household or family in the occupied Syrian Golan one of whose members is not incarcerated in an Israeli prison or detention centre and suffering from various types of torture and denial of basic human rights, such as the right to life and the right to contact one’s family.

“The principal features of this repression, which is a firmly established component of Israeli policy in the Golan and the other occupied Arab territories, include detention, imprisonment and restricted residence, to which the whole population is liable and to which thousands (approximately one quarter of the population) have actually been subjected. It is a rare occurrence anywhere in the world for one quarter of a people living under occupation to be subjected to detention and imprisonment. The names of some of the Syrian residents of the Golan who have been imprisoned by the occupation authorities are listed below.

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"The ongoing detentions of citizens are illustrated by the following:

" 5 November 2000, a resident of the village of Mas'ada was detained for carrying Palestinians in his vehicle.

"On 20 December 2000, the enemy authorities detained a young man, Burhan Muhammad al-Qadhmani from Majdal Shams, on the charge of possessing a weapon and, several months later, he was sentenced by the court at Safad to a fixed term of 15 months' imprisonment on that charge.

"On 28 December 2000, the enemy authorities detained a young man, Sadiq al-Qadhmani from Majdal Shams, after occupation forces carried out a barbaric raid on his home.

"On 24 January 2001, the occupation authorities detained the young men Daniel Nasib Abu Zeid, Adham Anis Abu Zeid and Radhi Suf Abu Zeid and, on the same day, the young detainee Muhammad Salih As'ad Abu Salih was sentenced to a term of one year and four months' imprisonment on the charge of attempting to run over an Israeli soldier with his vehicle.

	<i>Full name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Length of sentence</i>	<i>Period served</i>	<i>Period remaining</i>
	Hayel Hussein Hamad Abu Zeid	33 years	27 years	16 years	11 years
2.	Bishr Suleiman Ahmad al-Maqt	36 years	27 years	16 years	11 years
3.	Sidqi Suleiman Ahmad al-Maqt	34 years	27 years	16 years	11 years
4.	Asim Mahmoud As'ad al-Wali	34 years	27 years	16 years	11 years
5.	Sitan Nimr al-Wali	35 years	27 years	16 years	11 years
6.	Amal Hamad Selim Uweidat	25 years	7½ years	4 years	3½ years
7.	Yasir Hussein Youssuf Khanjar	24 years	7½ years	4 years	3½ years
8.	Ridhwan Jamil As'ad al-Jawhari	25 years	4½ years	3 years	1½ years
9.	Wi'am Mahmoud Salman Ammasha	19 years	5 years	1½ years	3½ years
10.	Wa'il Najib Zahwa	17 years	2 years	1½ years	6 months
11.	Muhammad Salih As'ad Abu Salih	22 years	1 year and 4 months	7 months	9 months
12.	Hisham Kamal Selim Shams	19 years	1½ years	16 months	2 months
13.	Burhan Muhammad al-Qadhmani	18 years	15 months	4 months	11 months

These prisoners, who are suffering from the most deplorable conditions of detention which are incompatible with the most fundamental humanitarian standards, have embarked, to no avail, on a number of hunger strikes in support of their demands for an improvement in their conditions of

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detention and imprisonment. For example, the hunger strike that they ended on 1 June 2000 formed part of a general hunger strike by all the Arab detainees in Israeli prisons.

“On 5 September 2000, as part of their arbitrary repressive campaigns against our people in the occupied Golan, Israeli occupation forces sent four young Syrian Arabs for trial on the trumped-up charge of attempting to run over an Israeli soldier who was standing at a military transport collection point. The names of these young men are:

- Samir Suleiman Tarif, 20, from Majdal Shams;
- Fadi Adnan Mahmoud, 21, from Majdal Shams;
- Anan Sami al-Mar’ei, 13, from Majdal Shams;
- Muhammad Salih As’ad Abu Salih, 21, from Mas’ada.

“At a press conference held on 12 September 2000, Major General Alik Ron, the Israeli Northern District Police Commander, admitted that this campaign of detentions had taken place.

“At 8.30 p.m. on 14 April 2001, Israeli military patrols directed their searchlights, and also fired a number of shots, at a Syrian police post in sector 7 of the United Nations positions.

“The families of detainees in the Golan hold numerous demonstrations and sit-ins as an expression of solidarity with their detained family members, particularly on the occasion of the annual day of solidarity on 21 April in which many residents of the Golan, as well as Palestinian Arabs, participate. One of the most recent mass sit-ins took place on 21 April 2001 at Majdal Shams in front of the office of the International Committee of the Red Cross and was supported by another simultaneous gathering expressing solidarity at Damascus. A few days earlier, on 15 April 2001, the Syrian Arab citizens in the occupied Golan participated in a demonstration organized by the Palestinian Jerusalem Youth Federation to express their solidarity with, and support for, the Arab detainees in Israeli prisons and to commemorate the legitimate national cause for which they were imprisoned, namely resistance to the occupation.

“The inhuman policy of repression which the Israeli occupation authorities are pursuing against Syrian Arab citizens in the occupied Golan is further illustrated by the fact that they are prevented from visiting their Syrian motherland to see their families and relatives. At the present time, the only alternative is for them to go to Jordan to meet their relatives from Damascus and other Syrian regions, with all the hardship and exorbitant financial costs that this entails. Moreover, approval for residents of the occupied Golan to travel to Jordan is subject to the whims of the occupation authorities, who use such approval as a means of pressure to extort taxes and other large amounts of money from them. The following are some examples of persons who were prevented from travelling:

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- The occupation authorities prohibited a delegation of citizens from the occupied Golan from travelling to Damascus to present their condolences on the occasion of the death of the late President Hafez al-Assad. The vociferous demonstration that our citizens held at the Quneitra crossing point on 12 June 2000 in protest at that prohibition was reported in the information media.
- On 25 October 2000, the occupation authorities prohibited a delegation of our citizens from the Golan from travelling to the town of Ramallah in the West Bank to visit persons injured in the intifada.
- On 1 March 2001, the occupation authorities refused to permit a delegation from the Golan to come to Damascus to take part in the Farmers Congress. They also refused to allow another delegation of physicians from the Golan to attend a Dental Congress at Damascus. In fact, the only residents of the Golan whom the occupation authorities allow to come to Damascus are ministers of religion, who are permitted to attend religious gatherings once a year, and students studying at Damascus University, whose travel authorizations are subject to Israeli extortion which is rejected by our citizens in the Golan since they are forced to pay exorbitant fees, amounting to about \$50, in respect of each application. The odious and inhuman practices of the occupation authorities are also illustrated by the fact that, on 7 January 2001, the abundant rainfall exposed a graveyard at the Banat Ya'qoub bridge in the western part of the Golan which contained the bodies of Syrian and other Arab citizens and soldiers who had been buried in a shameful manner. This was revealed by the London-based *Al-Wasat* magazine in a lengthy article published at the time.
- The population of the occupied Golan are likewise prohibited from developing, or building on, their land. The occupation authorities carry out an annual aerial land survey to look for any change or expansion, in the event of which taxes and fines are imposed. Agricultural land is also carefully surveyed and, if any forest plants are found thereon, this is regarded as proof that the land is not privately owned and, consequently, can be seized from its owners and expropriated by the so-called Nature and National Parks Protection Authority. The many burdensome taxes that are imposed on agricultural land include taxes on water, and even on rainwater, the use of which by farmers is severely obstructed in so far as anyone wishing to build a water cistern is required to pay a licence fee equivalent to more than \$2,000. When the occupation authorities established a water supply network to irrigate settlement land, the residents of the Golan established a corresponding network at their own expense. However, the occupation authorities, having expropriated the water resources, which they are pumping to the settlements, sell to the Syrian Arab population their own water, including the water from Lake Mas'ada, which is the largest natural water reservoir in the occupied Golan. While abundant water is supplied to the Israeli settlements, which irrigate their crops every week or every few days, the Syrian Arab population are able to irrigate, with an inadequate quantity of water, only once every 25 days or so in the summer season. The occupation authorities also prevent herders from watering their livestock from the lake, thereby forcing them to purchase water for that purpose.

Resistance to the occupation

“Neither the policy of occupation and settlement nor the policy of prevarication and procrastination or

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the policy of repression and torture have discouraged our valiant people in the occupied Golan from confronting and opposing the occupation; in fact, those policies have strengthened our people's resolve and made them even more attached to their land, their nation and their identity and even more eager to proclaim their loyalty to the Syrian Arab Republic and their belief that the dark hours of the occupation will inevitably be dispelled by the dawn of liberation and reintegration in their nation. Our people in the Golan have resisted the attempts to impose Israeli citizenship on them and have confronted and opposed the heavily armed occupation forces with the strength and faith inherent in persons defending their rights. Those attempts provoked a large-scale uprising by our people which lasted for five months from 14 February to the end of June 1982, during which violent clashes and angry confrontations took place and our people emphasized to the whole world that they were Syrians and would remain Syrians as long as they lived.

"From time to time, the occupation authorities prosecute young men and incarcerate them in prisons and detention centres, merely for expressing their attachment to the Syrian Arab Republic, with a view to terrorizing the Golanis as a whole and suppressing their national feelings. However, it is common knowledge that our people celebrate all of the Syrian Arab Republic's national events, constantly affirm their national identity and reject the Zionist occupation. The most recent action taken in this regard was their boycott of the members of Lahad's hireling militia whom Israel, fearing the wrath of the Lebanese, relocated to a settlement in the Golan.

- On 3 October 2000, violent clashes broke out between Israeli occupation forces and our people in the occupied Golan who were protesting at the manner in which the occupation forces were targeting young Palestinians during the confrontations taking place in occupied Palestine. The population of the Golan gathered in the centre of the village of Majdal Shams where they held a demonstration and threw stones at Israeli troops in protest at the barbaric massacres which the occupation forces were committing against unarmed Palestinian civilians and Islamic holy places.

- On 14 December 2000, our people in the occupied Syrian Golan proclaimed a general strike, which was observed in all the social, commercial and agricultural sectors and also by schoolchildren in the villages of Mas'ada, Majdal Shams, Buq'ata and Ain al-Tineh, as an expression of their steadfast stand against the occupation and their resolve to preserve their Syrian Arab national identity and to continue the national liberation campaign until the Golan is freed from every taint of Israeli occupation.

- On 20 December 2000, during a demonstration that they organized on the anniversary of Israel's annexation of the Golan on 14 December 1981, about 50 students from the occupied Golan attending Damascus University delivered a letter to the United Nations office at Damascus in which they emphasized the dangers inherent in Israel's recent activities involving the burial of toxic waste in the villages of the occupied Syrian Golan. In their letter, addressed to Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, they called upon him and all international organizations and institutions concerned with human rights and environmental safety not only to take rapid and effective action to save them from certain death at the hands of Israel in their occupied villages but also to send an international commission to investigate the facts and expose Israeli practices as soon as possible. The demonstrators also called upon the United Nations to intervene to secure the release of 17 Syrian detainees from the

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